

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'
MILLENNIAL STAR

ESTABLISHED IN 1840

“There are many people who have preached a funeral service over ‘Mormonism,’ and sung their mournful dirges; these people have gone, but ‘Mormonism’ survives. It lives because it is God’s work.”—CHARLES A. CALLIS.

No. 47, Vol. 95

Thursday, November 30, 1933

Price One Penny

RESTRAINTS AND CONVENTIONS—WHY?

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

I HAVE been asked to write something for the young people of the Church. I am happy to give a few thoughts by way of suggestion.

If I were asked to name what I considered to be the most outstanding trend of modern life, particularly among the young people, I think I would say it is the rebellion against the restraints and conventions of our present life, whether those restraints and conventions affect our physical, intellectual, or spiritual activities and being. Some may say this rebellion shows merely a wish for greater liberty; others may consider it a destructive demand for complete license. As frequently happens, neither extreme view seems wholly right. The truth probably lies somewhere between.

To reach a reasonably sound conclusion as to the rightfulness or wisdom upon the whole general question of restraints and conventions, as also upon any particular restraint or convention, one must not lose sight of certain basic considerations.

To begin with, I am justified in saying that one may properly look closely at any proposed new “freedom” from restraint or convention in order to learn what, if any, personal interest the advocate of the proposal has therein. Personal observation supports the statement that he who speaks for the tearing down of convention and the doing away with restraint may be one who wishes to escape the odium of some defect of his own habit or character, by having everyone else either become as he is or take his point of view. The fable of the fox with the short tail, is in point. It must ever be remembered that the testimony of an interested witness may be always, and justifiably, scrutinized to determine its value. The proposal by a thief—under trial for grand larceny—that the restraint of the law of honesty be abolished, is not worthy of serious consideration.

A proposal that existing restraints and conventions shall be abolished, is a proposal which obviously may not be wisely settled by a flat "yes" or "no." Each proposal to wipe out a particular convention or to demolish a particular restraint must be examined on its own merits before a wise conclusion can be reached thereon. Certainly some conventions and restraints must be retained; it is equally certain that others might be changed or abolished. The restraint which forbids murder may not be safely abandoned; the convention which prescribes the difference between dinner jacket and full evening dress might be forgotten.

ANY suggestive discussion of this subject might assume that, broadly speaking at least, there are certain things in our civilization, culture, and religion which everyone will admit are either desirable, or necessary, or both, to retain.

We may take, as a premise, that there are certain virtues which we should possess and retain as good citizens, as upright men and women, and as members of civilized society. Among such virtues we might perhaps list certain "thou shalt nots" of the Decalogue—thou shalt not kill, nor steal, nor lie, nor commit adultery, and to the virtues so negatively commanded, might be added affirmatively, the need for industry and sobriety. These virtues are named because looking at mankind as a whole and at the Christian nations particularly, these characteristics seem to be basic to their civilization. They seem to be equally basic to any form of orderly society of which we can conceive. For if every person murdered and robbed and lied and loafed and caroused, if there were an indiscriminate association of the sexes, no ordered society could exist, and without such society we have scant ground for hoping, and no ground for believing, that humanity could escape becoming merely animal.

So, if the foregoing considerations are sound, we may affirm, as a necessary conclusion, that organized society demands some restraints and some conventions. How much and what, of either or both, is a more difficult question, and the answer to the question will in some measure depend upon the persons and people affected and their state of civilization and righteousness. The greater the civilization and righteousness which a person or a people shall possess, the less will be the need of restraint and convention.

The qualities or virtues just named have obviously much if not most to do with what might be considered the moral side of our lives as distinguished from the merely animal side. But, in fact, it is the moral side of our natures which makes us more than mere animals.

Some have a disposition to resent any moral convention or restraint or any hampering of their presumed "natural instincts," as being contrary to the natural order, which, as their criticism shows, they conceive to be a state of complete license.

But this conclusion is untrue, for nature is *law*, not *license*.

The physical world is fully controlled by law; if it were not, it could not and would not exist. Heat, light, electricity, what we call matter—air, water, earth—all are subject to and controlled by law. Our bodies being matter, are equally subject to great physical laws, from none of which is there any escape.

Merely by way of illustration : If we walk off a cliff we fall. It is immaterial whether we know the cliff is there, or whether we know we will fall if we walk off, or whether we desire to fall, or whether we step off the cliff by one foot or jump off by five feet ; the result is the same and inevitable. If we touch a hot stove we are burned, ignorance of its heat, or an accidental touching, or our own preferences, or our lack of knowledge that hot stoves burn, all are immaterial ; if we lay hold of a copper wire, heavily charged with electricity, we are killed—again neither ignorance nor accident nor preference will avail us. Acid burns our flesh, water drowns us, poison gas kills us. These results all come from the operation of laws which are immutable ; they execute themselves ; they do not depend either upon our knowledge of their existence, or upon our consent to their operation, or upon our desire that they manifest themselves ; the penalty inevitably follows the violation.

We say the penalty inevitably follows the violation—this is true unless some other law intervenes to obviate or mitigate the penalty. If we step from a cliff in a parachute, if we touch the stove with asbestos gloves, if we take hold of the charged copper wire with rubber gloves, if we wear a gas mask, we may escape injury. But these escapes are themselves the result of the operation of other laws.

Thus whether we will or will not, we are physically amenable to the physical law. Indeed, we are not only amenable to physical law, but as just stated, our very physical existence is due to the operation of those laws, and without the unvarying operation of the definite and predetermined laws which function without our knowledge or will or consent, we would not exist.

NOW, since the physical world and our human existence are subject to law, in every relation and condition of which we are cognizant, it is inconceivable that affairs of the mind and spirit of men, embracing the moral and spiritual world, are not also controlled by law. This is certainly true in so far as the physical condition involves the moral conduct, for there is a near relationship—and neither its nearness nor its nature are now understood—between biological man and moral man.

For example, a blow upon the head which injures the brain may completely destroy a man's moral sense, yet physically his body may continue to function ; so with injury to the brain and nervous system by riotous living. A man may temporarily destroy or suspend his moral sense by becoming drunk. These things come about by the operation of laws controlling our physical bodies and indirectly our moral sense, which laws function with the same certainty and in the same manner as other physical laws ; they are self-executory, that is, they need no other agency to enforce them ; they operate without our knowledge, and irrespective of our consent or will.

Thus a person rebelling against the restraint of law, rebels against a principle which permeates and controls all nature, including the very existence—being—of himself, and controls also his moral conduct.

For a number of obvious reasons we must assume that man is also subject to law, intellectually and spiritually. We may consider one suggestive example : Certain qualities such as love

and hate, joy and grief, mercy and justice, charity and unforgiveness, ambition and humility, are common in a greater or less degree to all men; within limits, all men display these qualities in the same way, manifest them by the same sort of acts; and all men disclose these qualities and invoke them generally upon the same causes. While the operation of the laws controlling these qualities is not always so obvious, nor is that operation amenable to such precise definition as is the operation of physical laws, yet that operation is just as certain.

Illustrations of a like kind might be added covering the growth and development of the mind, which would indicate just as definite controlling laws, but it is not thought necessary to do so in order to make the point that intellectually and morally we are controlled by definite and certain laws.

However, there is this fundamental difference between the operation of the physical laws—as they are termed herein—and intellectual or moral laws to which reference has just been made. In the latter the personal will of the individual may undoubtedly step in and modify the manifestation and effect of the exercise of the quality, and perhaps even modify the quality itself. We may will to restrain our love and control our hate, to keep within limits our joy and to expose our grief, to refrain from mercy and to temper justice, to suppress charity and to curtail unforgiveness, to strangle ambition and to throw aside humility. But such operation of the will is not dissimilar, indeed is analogous to the work of the parachute, the asbestos and rubber gloves, and the gas mask, for the will itself functions under certain controlling influences and laws, so that its interposition in the modification of the human qualities named, is not either arbitrary or uncontrolled.

As with our physical and moral existence, so with our spiritual existence, for here also are certain definite, controlling laws which are self-executory—that is, they require no other agency but themselves to enforce them. Moreover, they operate whether we know of them or not, or whether we wish them to operate or not. These laws are eternal and immutable. Our spirits, like our bodies and like our minds, may grow and develop; they may dwarf, they may retrograde—what really happens being dependent upon whether or not we obey the laws that govern spiritual existence and development.

TH**ERE** are a few basic spiritual laws of which we know; there are very many rules of conduct deducible from those laws and designed for securing obedience to the laws. We shall find both the laws and the rules of conduct in the scriptures—the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price—and in the inspired writings and utterances of the leaders of the Church.

It is not necessary to catalogue these rules and laws, nor would such a list be useful for our present purposes. But as use has already been made of the Decalogue, God's word which came to man from the thunders of Sinai, we may resort again to that great code for an example.

The first commandment of the Decalogue is :

Thou shalt have no other gods before me,

- In our time when the Western World has come to a worship of one God only, the need for such a commandment, as among ourselves, is no longer necessary, unless it is to be applied figuratively. (It may be parenthetically observed that such an application might not be a strained one, for modern man has, in a too large extent, made materialism his god.)

But ancient Israel, to whom the command was given, was not in this situation. They were a relatively small people; they were weak spiritually from their long contact with idolatrous Egypt; they were about to take up a residence among other people who were idolators, worshipping many gods; this idolatry was of a vicious sort that was inconsistent with and in fact destructive of, the life which God's people must live, to remain His people and to do the work which He had planned for them. God's work could not then, and cannot now, be maintained in partnership with a worship which calls for the heathenish practices of human sacrifice and grossly immoral rites. Our own civilization cannot be preserved in the presence of such heathenish practices, for a moment's reflection will show how human sacrifice would outrage every feeling of humanity that generations have fostered and would wipe out the society that adopted it, while heathenish immorality would lead to practices and exercises that would destroy the family—the unit upon which all we have that is good is built—as well as breed and spread disease that would wipe out the people adopting it. The fact that the mighty peoples who erected human sacrifice and immoral practices into religious ceremonies and beliefs, have been blotted out from the earth, while those holding such things in abomination have increased and flourished, comes near to the point of proof (if any proof were needed) that Christianity is right and heathen idolatry is wrong, and that the human race cannot progress under those heathenish standards.

So far as human experience goes—and to such experiences we must appeal for human knowledge and wisdom—this great spiritual law, expressed in this command, is just as universal, just as inescapable, just as self-executory, just as independent of our wills and consent, as any physical law of which we know. Violate the law and we suffer; obey it and we are blessed. This is the evidence and testimony of history.

ONE law we may take from the teachings of the Saviour—that of the law of talents, uttered by Him in the Parable of the Talents. Because I shall refer to it in another connection, I shall quote the parable in full:

For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.

And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.

But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliverdst unto me five talents; behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliverdst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.

His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.

His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matt. 25: 14-30.)

This is a law which operates in the physical, intellectual and spiritual world with equal certainty and force.

An athlete who fails to train, loses the race which is won by someone else.

A great intellect unemployed, loses its power and finally decays, while some other intellect which has been used to its utmost does the work which the first might have performed.

A great spiritual gift, unused, is lost by its possessor and is given to someone else, that is, the work to be done through the gift is carried on by someone else who is willing to honour and use the gift.

NOW all these results follow the violation of this law of the talent, just as certainly, as constantly, as uniformly as follow the results of the violation of any law of which we know, whether the law be physical, intellectual, or spiritual. Our consent has nothing to do with the operation of the law, nor has our wish or desire or our knowledge of it.

As the parachute tempers the operation of the law of gravitation, or the asbestos glove the operation of the laws of heat, or the rubber gloves the laws of electricity, just so the mercy of God and His grace may temper the operation of any spiritual law; but (again appealing to human knowledge and experience) the law stands, however much God, in His infinite mercy, may temper its operation or mitigate its penalty.

Furthermore, in certain laws and rules relating to the conduct of men, as among themselves or as affecting themselves in their relation to God, the Almighty may suspend or modify the performance of the law or rule; but the law stands, to become again operative when the Lord wills.

It is clear from what has been said that the great laws governing the universe—physical, intellectual and spiritual—are co-existent with that universe known to us: they are self-executory, that is, they enforce themselves, no one needs to enforce them; they operate independently of man's will, consent, or desire; they operate impartially and universally; every creature, human or animal, every other created thing, is subject to the applicable law.

It follows that whether we wish or whether we do not wish restraint, yet restraint is inherent in all creation: it has endured in the past, it will exist in the future. Efforts to ignore restraint, or to evade it, or to destroy it, will meet with failure. The Law will say to us, as the Lord said to Saul, journeying to Damascus: "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Saul surrendered to the law; so shall we.

On the other hand, the law operates just as certainly in its blessings as in its penalties. If we avoid the cliff, we do not fall; if we do not touch the stove, we are not burned; if we leave the charged electric wire alone, we are not injured. So in intellectual and spiritual matters: if we do not offend, we suffer no injury. But in intellectual and spiritual matters, obedience to law brings not only the blessings of mere absence of penalty, but it brings also, in every case, increased power and strength, it brings growth and development, it brings us nearer to the ultimate goal pronounced by the Master: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." And this truth is the wonder and the glory of our intellectual and spiritual lives.

IN this view, how superficial and tragic is the thought that there is no controlling law (physical, intellectual, or spiritual); that all is mere convention; that all is the result of chance or of man's own will; that all may be changed to suit either his whim or his seeming convenience.

In this view also what error to deal with the eternal verities on the assumption that they may be changed by human will, or that human authority can relieve the individual or the race from their operation. The Presidency of the Church cannot change the law; it is eternal, immutable. God may from time to time speak, and He has spoken, through His chosen servants, suspending or modifying great principles, or mitigating the rigours of the law. But truth stands; and the truth (delivered through the Lord's anointed) which suspends or modifies the principles or law, is just as mandatory as the law itself.

Truth and law are eternal; they have always existed; they will always exist.

Some young people appear to feel that the laws and principles of the Church are changing. This is an error; truth cannot change.

Young people who feel thus, fail to make a necessary distinction between a law or principle, on the one hand, and a rule or regulation prescribed to accomplish or facilitate the observance of the law, on the other.

Perhaps it would be useful to develop somewhat this thought.

In the revelation giving the fundamental and much discussed Word of Wisdom, the Lord has given instructions showing that

(Continued on page 778)

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1933

EDITORIAL

LET US GIVE TRUE THANKS

EXPRESSION of gratitude brings into operation great truths! To appreciate the kindness of others and to desire to express one's gratefulness to them is a natural, uplifting emotion. And, on the other hand, to see and know that one's kindness has found its mark, and is appreciated, is a source of righteous satisfaction. Expression of gratitude and appreciation gives power to bind human beings together with the strong bands of fellowship and love, and to give to life an increasing richness. Such spirit of true thanksgiving is as a guard that keeps friendship from losing its sweetness. Under its influence, God-given blessings are prevented from becoming commonplace. Indeed, thanksgiving gives endless freshness to life.

To-day, November 30th, is Thanksgiving Day for the people of a great nation. By Presidential decree and age-old tradition, all America will give joyous thanks to God for the blessings they enjoy at His hand. The summer's harvest is gathered in, comparative peace covers the land, God has been good. To-day, after excitement of homecomings, football games, and turkey dinners—the superficial emblems of present-day Thanksgiving observance—has worn off, the thoughts of many American people will drift back over the centuries to the little band of New England Pilgrims, and the first Thanksgiving Day in the New World. The Pilgrim Fathers had survived their first bleak New England winter; the first summer's crops, though meagre, were harvested and stored up against the wants of the coming winter; they were at peace with their redskinned neighbours; and for a whole year they had enjoyed religious liberty—the object of their courageous journey to a new and little known land. And so, devout hearts overflowing with gratitude to a gracious God, they set aside one day in the late autumn to give thanks to Him—a day that their children and children's children, down to this day, have religiously continued to observe.

On this traditional day, too, the thanksgiving thoughts of many Latter-day Saints will be on the sacrifices of another group of hardy pilgrims—the "Mormon" Pioneers. Like their New England forbears, they, too, had known the sting of religious persecution, and the hatred engendered by religious fanaticism and bigotry. Willingly they faced an unfriendly land and the rigours of pioneer life in order that they might taste the sweet-

ness of religious liberty. Their lot was hard. Yet, through all the trials and hardships of their tedious trek over barren wastelands, and through all the privations of a bitter winter that they faced when they reached their destination, thanksgiving to God was always uppermost in their hearts and minds. No doubt their humble gratitude to Divine Providence was, in part, the source of the endless strength and courage that carried them onward. Their sacrifices have meant much to Latter-day Saints. Many, to-day, will give thanks to God for those courageous men and women—the “Mormon” Pioneers.

We in the Missions of Zion, though thousands of miles separate us from the people of our sister nation, might well join with them in their Thanksgiving Day observance. We, too, have much to be thankful for that well outdistances our best efforts of acknowledgment. Greatly affecting our own lives are the sacrifices and contributions of the early missionaries who brought the Gospel to British shores nearly one hundred years ago. Under divine commission, they established a new era of “freedom” in these lands that is in many ways comparable to the contributions of the Pilgrim Fathers to the American people. We, to-day, are living in the light of Truth brought by these humble missionary messengers of God. Enriched by its understanding and application, our lives have become purposeful and precious to us. We are guided and comforted by an understanding of the great Gospel plan under which we have our existence. We know and feel the closeness of a kind Father in Heaven whose sole work and eternal glory is to bring to pass our immortality and eternal life. We hold membership in His kingdom on earth. Ours is the opportunity to live life in its completeness, to know the significance of struggle and to grow thereby. God’s chosen leaders stand ready to help us and to guide us into divinely appointed paths.

We should be thankful, too, that we are not alone in our love of truth. Our friends, our neighbours, our countrymen are looking upward through the cloud of darkness that has covered the earth in the past. Perhaps there are a few among them who are weak and selfish, and do not want light for fear it will change their self-centered and self-sufficient lives. Perhaps there are those who would like to see the light, but are frustrated in their attempts by men who willingly and knowingly lead them from it. But these are in the minority. Everywhere, among the honest in heart, there is not only a yearning for light, but there is a striving to reach it. We, as members in the Church of Christ, are richly privileged. Ours is the responsibility, with its resultant potential blessings, of helping to lead these seekers to this great latter-day work of truth and light. Indeed, with things for which we would give thanks “our cup runneth o’er.”

But there is more to gratitude and true thanks than mere verbal acknowledgment. The blessings and power that come from thanksgiving are dependent upon its completeness. To our

friends we can return thanks for favours and kindness by reciprocal deeds. But how best can we return our vast debt of thanks to our gracious God? These words of the Saviour indicate the way—"For inasmuch as ye do it unto the least of these, ye do it unto me." Service to fellowmen! That is the truest expression of gratitude to God. Active consideration for the needs of others makes our spoken and heartfelt thanks to God complete, and brings into our lives the operation and benefit of the great truths that underlie the true expression of gratitude. May we on this Thanksgiving Day unitedly voice our thanks to the Giver of all things, and may our gratitude be measured by our works as well as words!—RICHARD S. BENNETT.

RESTRAINTS AND CONVENTIONS—WHY?

(Concluded from page 775)

tobacco, alcohol, tea, coffee, and other things, are not good for the body of man. This revelation is given "not by commandment or constraint, but by revelation and the Word of Wisdom, showing forth the order and will of God in the temporal salvation of all saints in the last days."

There is in this revelation no categorical "thou shalt not" of the Decalogue; on the contrary this revelation is "given for a principle with promise, adapted to the capacity of the weak and weakest of all saints, who are or can be called saints." There are no penalties prescribed for a violation of the law, but blessings are promised through its obedience.

And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones:

And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint.

And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them.

Now, this Word of Wisdom is the Lord's law of health. Modern science supports it in every particular.

IT is demonstrated that nicotine, alcohol, tannin, and caffeine exert their effects upon the body, and the Lord and modern science say these effects are harmful. These effects are visited upon us whether we wish the effects or not; whether we consent to them or disprove them. These noxious things enforce their own mandates against the body, no other agency is necessary or used. This is the law.

Some complain about the Word of Wisdom as if it were a rule of conduct imposed upon them by the Church authorities, and so a rule that could be changed by the Church authorities. In accordance with this idea certain persons have suggested changes or modifications of the Word of Wisdom. But the Word of Wisdom is not a rule of conduct; it is a law—the Lord's law—of health. It was promulgated by Him. The law existed before He

told it to us: it would exist if the revelation were blotted out from the book. The Church authorities have nothing to do with the law. God, speaking through the forces of the physical world, has prescribed it, and so long as those forces exist the law will remain.

It is therefore the foolish ignorance of a child, to assume that the First Presidency can issue a rule that will permit the use of any of these injurious things without their harmful effects. It would be an easy and, in one sense, a pleasing gesture, as satisfying Church members who wish to use these harmful substances, to declare the Word of Wisdom no longer existent. But such a declaration would be no more efficacious than a declaration that the law of gravitation no longer operates.

SO much may be said about the law; something may now be said regarding rules and regulations set up to secure the observance of the law.

It has been pointed out above that there is a near relationship between biological man and moral man; that neither the nature of this relationship, nor its nearness, is now understood. But this relationship, whatever it is and however near it may be, is of sufficient importance so that God gave to ancient Israel wandering in the Wilderness, and to His people in our day, a law of health.

It may be observed in passing that the difference in the character of the two codes of laws given and of the things proscribed in each, is an important illustration and example of how God speaks to a people in accordance with their stage of knowledge, their culture, and their surroundings. I do not pretend to say why the Lord gave to Israel some commands and withheld others. But this much may be said. It was seemingly unnecessary to forbid the use of tobacco, tea and coffee to ancient Israel, for apparently they knew nothing of these things; and alcoholism, though forbidden to the priests under certain conditions and discountenanced to the people, had not taken hold of them. It was unnecessary in our day to give intimate instructions of the Mosaic code concerning sanitation and diet, because science was revealing to us the laws relating to such things, and we were generally obeying them. But our science had not yet reached, when the Word of Wisdom was given, accepted conclusions upon drugs and narcotics, nor upon the effects of alcoholism, which had become almost a besetting sin. In this situation the Lord revealed His modern law of health. So God spoke to each people in the language and terms they understood and in accordance with their needs.

Since, on account of the near relationship between biological man and moral man, the health of the people is of vital importance, the Church naturally uses its utmost influence to make and keep its members healthy. So the Church adopts rules, designed to aid in securing an observance of the Word of Wisdom—the law of health. Thus, to name but one such, it makes a rule that non-observers of the Word of Wisdom shall not be welcomed in our Temples. This is a *rule* as distinguished from a *law*. This *rule* could be changed, and it will doubtless disappear when the Lord's law of health is observed by His people, though the law will still stand. Since admission to our Temples

is a great boon and blessing, this rule leads to our observance of the Word of Wisdom.

One more illustration of the difference between a law and a rule or regulation may be given :

The law of talents, already referred to, embraces within its purview the curse of idleness, for an idle person never cultivates or improves a talent. Therefore, rules and regulations are from time to time prescribed by the Lord, through the Church, to secure industry and destroy idleness. Anything which promotes or leads to idleness must be discouraged, particularly if it shall also involve or tend to lead to other habits that shall normally bring us to transgression.

It is on this account that card-playing is discountenanced by the Church. It is not generally contended that card-playing is an inherent sin. But card-playing seems to take hold of those addicted to it in such a way that it frequently becomes almost their major thought and purpose in life, at least so far as leisure time or social intercourse is concerned. But card-playing provides no growth in spirit ; it produces no development in mind, commensurate with the time spent. It is thus in good part a waste of time, hence in effect idleness, which is a curse. Some people affirm they play cards merely as a mental relaxation from strenuous work, or to divert their minds from brooding and anxiety. But there are many useful and diverting pastimes that might be used for the same purpose and from which some cultural or educational advantage might be derived ; obvious diversions of the latter kind are good music and good literature, history, fiction, poetry, drama. The general effect of card-playing upon the people as a whole cannot be characterized as wholesome.

FURTHERMORE, card-playing tends to lead to gambling, and gambling at cards (bridge, for example) frequently becomes an absorbing and harmful mania which destroys both the effort and the desire to engage in useful vocation or avocation. But this is not the worst : The gambling habit is like a narcotic, it grows upon those who have it, until it may so affect their integrity as to make them cheats and thieves. Of course, many people play cards who do not succumb to the lure of gambling, and thereby do not correspondingly suffer.

So looking to the whole question and the problems involved, the Church has felt it must discourage card-playing, not because (as has been many times pointed out) card-playing is itself to be considered as a cardinal sin, but because human experience shows that card-playing too frequently leads to sin.

This discouragement of card-playing may be considered as a rule or regulation established to secure the observance of a law—the law of the talents which makes of idleness a curse.

As soon as any other game, no matter what it may be, so develops that its harmful effects overshadow its benefits, it must fall under a like ban.

An illustration of how a regulation may be abrogated because not applicable to changed conditions, may be added. We take it from the law of health of ancient Israel. For evidently the Lord's law is as already indicated, that His people must be healthy and clean.

To Moses was given a dietary and sanitary code that was to

govern Israel. It was a code founded on scientific principles. It was the most complete not only of its own time, but of the millenniums that followed. It would be difficult for any student to escape the conclusion that the Mosaic dietary and sanitary code was dictated from a full knowledge of biological laws as well as a complete knowledge of human physiology and of advanced medical and scientific principles. One of the prohibitions of that code ran against the use by the Israelites of sea foods "that have not fins and scales."

To-day we eat many wholesome sea foods that do not meet this ancient requirement. Again it must be said that it is not for me to attempt to suggest the reasons why the Lord gave this great law, nor the reasons why He made this and other dietary distinctions. But looking at the matter from the point of view of human knowledge, one reason why the Lord forbade such things to ancient Israel might have been the extreme perishability of certain sea foods which would not be found either in the Wilderness or in Palestine, sea foods which rapidly decay, and which in decaying, generate poisons, destructive of health and, indeed, of life itself. Ancient Israel had no such rapid transportation as would enable the delivery of such food materials while they were still fresh, and no refrigerating processes by which they might preserve such sea food materials pending the time they were to be eaten. Under such conditions, even a wise human lawgiver would to-day enact such a law as was given to ancient Israel, and for the reasons I have suggested. But however that may be, the Lord made to Israel an absolute prohibition against the eating of certain such food.

But in our time, with our rapid transportation, our efficient refrigeration, such sea foods may be properly preserved and, so preserved, seem as wholesome as other sea foods that have fins and scales: the Lord has not forbidden these foods to us and we eat them.

THUS the law that God's people must be clean and healthy has not changed, but the rule prescribed to secure obedience to the law has changed with the change in the manner of our living.

It is not necessary to elaborate further the thesis that restraint (that is, law) and convention (that is, rule and regulation) are necessary, nor that law permeates and controls the whole universe which we know—physical, intellectual and spiritual. Enough has been said to suggest that neither law, nor rule and regulation, except in trivial matters, are arbitrarily imposed by some despotic, ignorant agency; that however imposed and by whatsoever or by whomsoever imposed, the laws are immutable, self-executory, and beyond the human will; and that laws may be suspended or their effects mitigated by the operation of other laws. Furthermore, in view of what has been said, it is unnecessary to multiply illustrations of why regulations are necessary and of how they may change. A little thought will show to any serious minded young person that these rules and regulations, framed to secure obedience to law, may change as methods and modes of life change, and that the changing of a rule and regulation is not a change of law and principle, which are eternal and unchangeable.

It is the first duty of young Latter-day Saints prayerfully to seek to know the law that they may render obedience to it, and next to learn the rule and regulation that they may diligently and reverently study them, that they may understand, know the reasons for, and live them. Many will be surprised to learn how understanding wipes out prejudice, resentment, and rebellion against those rules of life which make for righteousness.

This much may be said with certainty and with no possible successful challenge: The young people of the Church will search in vain for any law or rule or regulation of the Church, obedience to which will not make them better citizens, give them a richer cultural life, and bring to them a greater joy and peace than they have ever before known; they will search in vain for law, rule, or regulation, obedience to which will bring any shade of sorrow or tinge of regret. This cannot be said for much of the new "freedom" which too many unthinking have taken into their lives.—(*Improvement Era*, November, 1933.)

IRISH CONJOINT CONFERENCE

THE large audience of clear-minded, lovable Irish people that packed the principal sessions of the Ulster and Free State conjoint Conference held in Belfast, November 5th, was, of itself, ample evidence that the Church is fast growing in popularity in Ireland. With many of the Dublin saints in attendance, the day was indeed a day of reunion and of spiritual rejoicing. All felt the presence of the Spirit of the Lord in rich abundance, and enjoyed the inspired instructions and addresses of the Mission and District leaders.

In the evening session, Sister Ena Birchall, accompanied by Sister Laura Dimlier, sang, "How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings." Sister Rintha Pratt Douglas, first to speak, most abundantly filled the expectations of the audience with her words of truth, telling of her personal acquaintance and experiences with the Presidents of the Church of Christ in this latter day. Next, Miss Jean Wartnaby and Miss Annie Carsons, from among our friends, sang, "Our Heavenly Father Knows." "The World Acknowledges the Truth of 'Mormon' Doctrine," was the theme of District President Stephen L. Dunford, who then spoke. The climax of the evening came with the talk of President James H. Douglas of the British Mission. He gave wise words of encouragement in these trying times, attesting that persecution is always the heritage of truth. Also, he brought to the minds of his listeners the fruits of "Mormonism," and told of the blessings of God that await the conscientious doer of His word.

The General Church authorities, and the Mission and District authorities were sustained by the membership present at the afternoon session. Also, several ten-minute talks were given by local members, their subjects being the Definition of a Christian, The Plan, The Fall, The Atonement, The Resurrection, The Definition of a "Mormon." A report of the splendid work of the travelling elders, local missionaries and general membership was read by District President Stephen L. Dunford. Excerpts from it show that the two missionaries in the Ulster District have

tracted 173 hours, visited investigators 471 hours, attended meetings 503 hours; had 2,707 calls answered while tracting, 661 Gospel conversations; have distributed six copies of the Book of Mormon, six other standard Church works, forty pamphlets, and 6,231 tracts—all since the last conference.

The morning session was largely occupied by Priesthood and Relief Society discussions and instructions. Also two brethren were ordained deacons by the presiding authorities.

The conference was directed by British Mission President James H. Douglas. The auxiliary meetings were directed by Sister Rintha Pratt Douglas, consulting supervisor of auxiliaries, and president of the Relief Societies of the British Mission. Also in attendance were President Benjamin R. Birchall of the Irish Free State District; Elder William H. Clawson, former president of the Leeds District; Elder Harold Sycamore of the Manchester District; President Stephen L. Dunford and Elder Max R. Openshaw of the Ulster District.

MAX R. OPENSHAW, Clerk of Conference.

SHEFFIELD BUILDING WEEK

THE Sheffield Branch will welcome visitors from other branches and districts during "Building Week," when the programme will be as follows:

Sunday, December 3rd:

Three sessions, 11 a.m., 2-30 p.m., 6-30 p.m.

Theme: "England's Hope is Zion's Power."

Monday, December 4th:

3 p.m. Word of Wisdom demonstration.

7-30 p.m. Word of Wisdom supper.

Tuesday, December 5th:

7-30 p.m. Genealogical Society concert.

Wednesday, December 6th:

7-30 p.m. Primary and Sunday School concert.

Thursday, December 7th:

7-30 p.m. Country Fair.

Friday, December 8th:

7-30 p.m. Lantern Lecture by Elder G. Homer Durham.

Saturday, December 9th:

3 p.m. Football match.

5-30 p.m. Tea.

7-30 p.m. Pioneer Ball (prizes for pioneer costumes).

Sunday, December 10th:

6-30 p.m. Building Fund testimony meeting.

All the activities, with the exception of the football match, will be held in the Latter-day Saint Chapel, corner of Ellesmere Road and Lyons Road, Pitsmoor, Sheffield. Moderate charges will be made for the entertainments. The Word of Wisdom demonstration and the lantern lecture will be free. The proceeds of the week will be given to the Branch Building and Missionary Fund. All saints who can are urged to attend.

CHURCH WIDE NEWS

CONFERENCE time brought several changes in Church mission administrations. To succeed President Samuel O. Bennion, who has been released as Central States Mission President to take up his new duties as a president in the first quorum of Seventy, was appointed President Elias S. Woodruff of the Western States Mission. President Woodruff will also have charge of the Zion's Printing and Publishing Company at Independence, Missouri. He is well qualified for his new responsibility, as he has had extensive experience in all phases of the printing business. Sister Woodruff will accompany him in his transfer.

SUCCEEDING acting-President Vere L. Stubbs, Reuben M. Wiberg, of Riverton, Utah, will become president of the Tongan Mission. He goes well prepared for his duties, having served as a missionary in the Tongan Islands from 1920 to 1925.

PRESIDENT JOSEPH J. DAYNES of Granite Stake has been selected to succeed President Woodruff as the presiding authority of the Western States Mission. His has been a life of activity in the Church. Two years, from 1899 to 1901, he spent in missionary work in England.

ELDER LEGRANDE RICHARDS, president of the Hollywood Stake, in California, has been appointed to succeed Elder Charles A. Callis as president of the Southern States Mission, according to announcement recently received from the First Presidency. Elder Richards is the son of Apostle George F. Richards; has filled two missions in the Netherlands, one as its president; was bishop of Sugar House Ward in Salt Lake City for six years; and has filled a short term mission in the Eastern States Mission. He goes to his new responsibility well qualified to carry on the splendid work of Elder Charles A. Callis, released to take up his duties in the Council of Twelve.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD

Releases and Departures: Elder Leslie T. Norton, of the Manchester District and the British Mission Office, where he served as Mission Supervisor of Sunday Schools and Genealogical work, and Elder T. Taylor Cannon of the Norwich, Welsh and Nottingham Districts, the latter over which he presided, were released from active missionary work on November 4th. They returned to America aboard the s.s. *Manhattan*, sailing from Harve, November 23rd.

Elder Sylvan E. Needham, Jr., of the London, and president of the Newcastle District, also released on November 4th, took passage for America aboard the s.s. *Manhattan*, on November 23rd.

CONTENTS

Restraints and Conventions—	Conjoint Irish Conference	... 782
Why? 769	Sheffield Building Week	... 783
Editorial:	Church Wide News	... 784
Let Us Give True Thanks... 776	From the Mission Field...	... 784

PUBLISHER: JAMES H. DOUGLAS, 43 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

EDITOR: JOSEPH F. MERRILL, 5 GORDON SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

JAMES FOGGO, PRINTER, 27 PARK LANE, LIVERPOOL